

# MEDIA RELEASE

7 June 2017

## Much Needed ACT Disability Reforms Are Welcome Measures in Enabling Inclusiveness & Fairness

Carers ACT welcomes the range of disability reform initiatives outlined in yesterday's ACT Budget that will assist unpaid carers who look after people with a disability.

"We are happy to see the ACT Government is building on its \$200 million annual support of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) by supplementing this with several new disability programs and services that will assist carers in their caring role," said Lisa Kelly, CEO of Carers ACT.

"We are particularly pleased to see the support for students with disability, particularly the **\$4.6 million** for provision of transport for ACT public school students with disability and a further **\$3 million** to ensure they have equal access and participation in schools. This will provide necessary assistance to carers and will enable them to continue working – an important benefit given that many carers experience financial hardship due to their caring responsibilities and find full-time employment difficult," Ms Kelly said.

"The **\$2.2 million** towards strengthening the Office of Disability means the Government can continue its important policy and advocacy work on behalf of Canberrans with disability, and will have more resources to support the ACT's transition to the NDIS.

"The **\$1.8 million** over four years to establish the Office of the Senior Practitioner will promote and safeguard the rights of people with disability, particularly in the use of restrictive practices, allowing them to have a better quality of life.

"We are also pleased to see **\$200,000** has been allocated to disability access grants to increase opportunities for Canberrans with disability to participate in community and voluntary groups, **\$300,000** to developing a Disability Justice Strategy to ensure that people with disability are treated equally before the law, and **\$70,000** to allow Self Help Organisations United Together (SHOUT) to continue to support its member organisations.

"We welcome these investments in disability services and new initiatives as they recognise and address the fact that people with disability often face discrimination and barriers to their full and equal participation in the community. By tackling these barriers we will create a more inclusive community and provide much needed support for carers," Ms Kelly said.

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